

**SENATE BILL 552
PRINTER'S NO. 619**

SPONSOR: Sen. Brubaker

The legislation amends the act of December 18, 2001 (P.L. 949, No. 114), as amended, known as the Workforce Development Act, to codify the Industry Partnership program within the Department of Labor and Industry.

The Workforce Development Act established a unified workforce investment system, including the statewide Workforce Investment Board as well as local investment boards. The Industry Partnership program has been operating within the system since 2004.

The Department shall work with business and industry, other agencies, economic development entities and career and technical entities to identify industry clusters. The Department shall further identify targeted industry clusters for economic development investments. It shall periodically evaluate targeted industry clusters and publish information relating to targeted industry clusters, along with a listing of high-priority occupations to guide the program. It shall establish and administer a grant program for the purposes of the act.

Industry Partnerships shall utilize grant funding to organize clusters, identify skills training needs, facilitate economies of scale among employers, assist educational and training institutions and generally coordinate a unified workforce development system.

Industry Partnerships that receive funding must show evidence of involvement of the local workforce investment boards, match funding of at least 25% and commit to participate in the industry partnership's performance improvement and evaluation system. Grant periods are not less than 12 and not more than 24 months.

The Department of Agriculture, the Department of Community and Economic Development, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Education and the Department of Public Welfare shall participate and assist the Department of Labor and Industry in implementation of the act.

The Department of Labor and Industry shall develop and implement an evaluation and performance system for the program, and must report annually to the General Assembly and workforce development stakeholders.

Effective immediately.

The legislation is identical to Senate Bill 1409 of the 2009-2010 session. Senate Bill 1409 was unanimously reported by the Labor and Industry Committee and passed the Senate by a 40-9 vote. The House of Representatives did not take up Senate Bill 1409 prior to the expiration of the session.

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